What is claimed is:

1. A Category Selection System (CSS) responsive to a User-input Device (UD), displaying on a client process of a Visual Display Unit (VDU), the CSS comprising:

a plurality of **category controls** , each configured to be selected or deselected with a single user action, and without affecting whether or not the other category controls are selected;

a plurality of **category labels**;

a plurality of **subgroup labels** which identify a set of related category controls;

a **controller** configured to:

receive input from the UD associated with a single category control, and

if the control is selected, deselect it, otherwise select it;

whereby a user can see at a glance which subgroups and categories are available and thus more quickly locate relevant categories, and whereby a user can see at a glance which categories are currently selected, making searches faster and easier.

2. The CSS recited in claim 1 wherein the single action is a click on a mouse button, a tap on a trackpad or equivalent action.

3. The CSS recited in claim 1 wherein the single action is a key press such as on the space bar or enter key.

4. The CSS recited in claim 1 wherein every individual category control is visible when the entire CSS is visible.

5. The CSS recited in claim 1 wherein each category label is adjacent to the associated category control.

6. The CSS recited in claim 1 wherein each category label is within the bounds of the associated category control.

7. The CSS recited in claim 1 wherein the subgroups indicated by the subgroup labels are arranged in a horizontal fashion as a single row, with each subgroup occupying a single column.

8. The CSS recited in claim 1 wherein the subgroups indicated by the subgroup labels are arranged as a set of rows and columns.

9. The CSS recited in claim 1 wherein each category control is a checkbox.

10. The CSS recited in claim 1 wherein each category control is a button with a selected state and an unselected state.

11. The CSS recited in claim 1, further including a subgroup control for each subgroup, and wherein the controller is further configured to:

receive input from the UD associated with a single subgroup control, and

if the subgroup control is selected, deselect it, otherwise select it;

12. The CSS recited in claim 11 wherein the controller is further configured to:

upon input from the UD: if the subgroup control is selected, deselect it and the controls for all categories within the subgroup, otherwise select it and the controls for all categories within the subgroup;

13. The CSS recited in claim 11 wherein the subgroup control is configured with three possible states: selected, unselected, and a third state indicating that some but not all categories within the subgroup are selected.

14. The CSS recited in claim 1, further including sub-subgroup labels which identify a set of related subgroups.

15. The CSS recited in claim 1, further including:

    a **category input port** configured to receive a list of category labels organized by subgroup, and

    a **selector construction mechanism** configured to create the labelled category controls organized by subgroup from the list of category labels.

16. The CSS recited in claim 1 wherein the category controls employ a markup language including HTML, XML and/or SGML.

17. The CSS recited in claim 1 wherein the category controls employ a portable document format.

18. The CSS recited in claim 1 wherein the category controls employ script and/or program code.

19. The CSS recited in claim 1 wherein the category labels include employment information.

20. A search system comprising:

    a CSS as recited in claim 1;

    an Information Location Mechanism (ILM) coupled to a data repository containing a plurality of data objects, the ILM being configured to receive search criteria in a

predetermined syntax, search the data repository, and retrieve zero or more data objects that conform to the search criteria;

a formatting engine to format the search results from the ILM; and

a client process and VDU to display the search form, the formatted search results and the action trigger.

21. The search system recited in claim 20 wherein the search form employs a markup language such as HTML, XML or SGML.

22. The search system recited in claim 20 wherein the contents of at least one data element of at least one data object include employment information.

23. The search system recited in claim 20, further including:

a sort port configured to receive sort criteria;

an Information Sorting Mechanism (ISM) coupled between the ILM and the formatting engine; the ISM being configured to receive the sort criteria in a predetermined syntax, receive a plurality of data objects from the ILM, sort the data objects according to the sort criteria, and forward the sorted data objects to the formatting engine.

24. A category selection method comprising:

displaying a plurality of category controls and associated category labels organized with subgroup labels,

receiving a single user action for a specific control,

toggling the selection state of that control without affecting the selection state of any other control;

whereby a user can see at a glance which subgroups and categories are available and thus more quickly locate relevant categories, and whereby a user can see at a glance which categories are currently selected, making searches faster and easier.

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